



A-Series Improves Efficiency and Reliability at Eckes-Granini



Overview

France's undisputed leader in the fruit juice market, Eckes-Granini, is enjoying major improvements in the speed and reliability of its coding and marking operations on leading brands including 'Joker', 'Réa' and 'granini.'



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Fast facts

- A need for robust, high-speed, high-quality coding and marking solution
- A Serac and SIG line run 200,000 bottles daily, each using two A-Series
- The A-Series can run 40,000 bottles an hour
- An A-Series on the distinctive oval ‘Joker’ juice carton line
- Three A-Series on the Tetra Pak line



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France’s undisputed leader in the fruit juice market, Eckes-Granini, is enjoying major improvements in the speed and reliability of its coding and marking operations on leading brands including ‘Joker’, ‘Réa’ and ‘granini’, thanks to the installation of product to pallet coding technology from Domino. The impressive production capacity at Eckes-Granini is reflected in statistics from the company’s 50,000m² facility in Macon: over 500,000 bottles and cartons are produced daily, amounting to a staggering annual output of 300 million litres of fruit beverages.

As with any beverage manufacturer, pivotal to Eckes-Granini’s production operations is the need for robust, high-speed, high-quality coding and marking solutions to effectively apply variable data such as bar codes and traceability codes.

Two years ago, having established a requirement for improved performance and reliability from its coding and marking equipment, Eckes-Granini decided not to continue its fifteen year association with its existing supplier. Instead, Operations Manager, Thierry David, selected to invest in Domino technology, and since that time, has embarked upon a rapid installation programme that spans Domino’s primary, secondary and tertiary coding solutions portfolio.

“We had become unimpressed with the rising costs of our incumbent provider, which together with increasingly sub-standard equipment quality, presented us with a few problems,” explains David. “Since selecting Domino as our exclusive supplier, we have noticed a significant improvement in the speed and reliability of our coding and marking equipment, which has enhanced our overall manufacturing operations immensely.”

In total, Eckes-Granini has four production lines in Macon; these comprise two PET blowmoulding lines – one Serac and one SIG – each of which fills around 200,000 bottles daily. Two Domino A200 small character continuous inkjet (CIJ) printers are now installed on each line to apply best before date and timestamp information. Three more A200’s operate on the company’s Tetra Pak line, which sees the same data applied to two litre gable-top cartons, while an eighth A200 is positioned on its Ovaline line to code the company’s distinctive oval ‘Joker’ juice cartons.

Having one solutions supplier to serve the company’s entire coding and marking needs was, for David, a key prerequisite. “From a time and efficiency aspect, the fact that I only need to speak to one person from one supplier is a real bonus,” he says. “This also increases our equipment flexibility and compatibility; we use the same ink and can minimise spare parts stock, thanks to cross-compatibility between coding units.”

According to David, the need for constant machine uptime and enhanced production line efficiency goes hand-in-hand with having the right equipment. “With our previous system, regular line stops for cleaning were a fact of life, with a resulting impact on productivity. Upon ink refills, our operators had to unscrew, empty and refill the system manually, which was both irksome and messy. With Domino’s system, there is no contact with the ink – they simply clip in the cartridge and the machine is running immediately.”

As regards production speeds, David is equally impressed with the performance of Domino’s user-friendly A-Series CIJ printers. “Our fastest lines are our two PET lines, which typically run at round 40-60m per hour and print 10,000 bottles during that time,” he explains. “Our A200s can handle 40,000 bottles an hour, so I’ve no worries at all about their capability.”

Eckes-Granini is provided further peace of mind, having signed up for Domino’s TotalCare plus Premium contract to cover its finishing line printers. This ensures that, should they need it, immediate access to Domino’s industry renowned expertise and back-up support is readily accessible.

Two years on and with Eckes-Granini’s total coding, marking and traceability needs taken care of, David has no regrets about replacing the company’s long-standing contract with its former supplier. “Given the scale of our operations, we cannot afford to be complacent at any stage of our production process; doing so could otherwise lead to unthinkable consequences.

“Domino’s team impressed me from the outset with their responsiveness and innovative technology proposition. Our production, as well as our position in the marketplace, is all the better for having made the decision to partner with them,” he concludes.

